

Employee-Led Effort Yields More Than 100 Winter Clothing Items

BY BRYLEIGH MIDDLETON
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Representatives from United Steelworkers Local 14300 Knox County donated 102 winter clothing items this year, surpassing last year's total through a second-year collaboration between the Next Generation Committee and Women of Steel Committee.

The donation of winter necessities, including 77 coats and 25 hoodies.

The paired committees raised enough money last year to purchase 100 coats, with the total being surpassed this year, with 102 coats donated, organizers added. Union leaders credited the success of the effort to the generosity



Above, representatives with United Steelworkers Local 14300 Knox County donate winter clothing to Dewitt Elementary, represented by principal Brian Barnhill (at left). Photo by Bryleigh Middleton

and commitment of co-workers who supported the fundraising campaign. Kimberly Anders, chair of the Women of Steel Committee, stated she is

“proud to work alongside such selfless individuals who consistently step up to support their community.”

Anders added, “We do these fundraisers to help out in the community; this is just one of many that we do.” Anders added that they feel the public should be more aware that there are people found locally who are willing to lend a helping hand in moments of need. “For the last two years, we have randomly picked schools to help out. I would love to have schools reach out to me,” Anders added, “I want

to reach the schools that need our help the most.”

“The goal was to remind the community that there are still many caring individuals willing to help those in need,” said Gary Swafford, chairman of the Next Generation committee.

Along with this donation, Anders shared that they supplied 100 backpacks in the summer earlier this year as well.

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Police Arrest Man After Discovery Inside Campus Dumpster

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A man was taken into custody early Tuesday morning after Barbourville police officers responded to reports of a disturbance and found him hiding inside a dumpster at the Union Commonwealth University Ramsey Center.

Upon making contact with the security guard on duty, he advised the responding officers that the Mills Garbage truck driver stated he believed someone was inside the dumpster and that he would return later for the garbage.

man, later identified as 43-year-old Emerson Johnson, inside a dumpster at the Union Commonwealth University Ramsey Center.



Emerson Johnson

When offered help out of the dumpster by responding officers, Johnson was observed to have slurred speech and erratic body and facial movements consistent with Methamphetamine usage. Johnson also had blood-

shot eyes and dilated pupils that would not react to light. While approaching the dumpster, officers reported smelling the odor of burnt marijuana and observed Johnson hiding under a bag of trash in the dumpster.

Johnson admitted to smoking marijuana while inside the dumpster, and would later admit to using Methamphetamines as well. Johnson was arrested and lodged in the Knox County Detention Center. He is due for a pretrial conference on January 27, 2026.

shot eyes and dilated pupils that would not react to light.

Once out of the dumpster, officers observed a used syringe and a marijuana pipe sticking out of Johnson's pocket in plain view. Johnsons admitted to smoking marijuana while inside the dumpster, and would later admit to using Methamphetamines as well.

Johnson was arrested and lodged in the Knox County Detention Center. He is due for a pretrial conference on January 27, 2026.

CRIME

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arraignment on charges of second-degree rape (no force), second-degree sodomy, first-degree sexual abuse, first-degree unlawful transaction with a minor (illegal sex act under 16 years old), procurement or promoting use of a minor by electronic means, distribution of obscene material to minors and first-degree persistent felony offender.

White appointed the public advocate's office to represent Castle, scheduled a Dec. 29 preliminary hearing in his case, and ordered that he have no contact with the alleged victim, their residence or their place of employment, if he is released on bond.

Kentucky State Police Trooper Matt Ridener arrested Castle about 1:18 p.m. Friday at a location about five miles north of Williamsburg after receiving a complaint that Castle was allegedly involved in a sexual rela-

tionship with a juvenile, according to the arrest citation.

The juvenile told police that she and Castle allegedly engaged in various types of sexual acts, including vaginal sex. The juvenile allegedly had video on her phone of Castle masturbating, Ridener wrote on the arrest citation.

During an interview with police, Castle allegedly admitted to digital penetration and sexual activity, according to the arrest citation.

Ridener also observed messages on the victim's phone of Castle allegedly texting her and asking if they could meet up for sex. Castle also allegedly admitted to sending the video, which the victim had on her phone, the citation stated.

Ridener is continuing the investigation.

Castle is also a convicted felon with a felony conviction in Knox County, according to his arrest citation.

The Timothy Adam Castle listed in the Knox County case has the same date

of birth and address as the Timothy Adam Castle listed in the Whitley County rape case, according to a News Journal analysis of the court cases.

Castle was indicted in the Knox County case on Aug. 23, 2024, on charges of first-degree possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine), drug paraphernalia, careless driving and possession of marijuana.

Castle pleaded guilty to the Knox County first-degree possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine) and drug paraphernalia charges on Dec. 16, 2024, and received a total sentence of three years probation. His plea agreement also called for him to complete an inpatient drug treatment program, according to Knox County court records.

As part of the plea agreement, the careless driving and possession of marijuana charges were dismissed.

As of 7 p.m. Monday, Castle remained incarcerated in the Whitley County Detention Center.

and received help from a getaway driver in order to escape from the scene.

CPD is working with the Knox County Sheriff's Department, the Laurel County Sheriff's Department, London City Police and the

FBI as they follow up on leads and attempt to locate the suspect. If anyone has any information that could be helpful in the ongoing investigation, they are encouraged to contact Corbin Police at 606-528-1122.

SUSPECT

FROM PAGE A1

who they believe has since left the state. Authorities also believe that the suspect did not work alone,

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